

1945

MRS BERNHEIMER

lake champlain smell  
of oilcloth candles  
in the rain we slept  
in flannel marshmallow  
on our fingers louis  
armstrong from a hall  
across the lake where  
my mother danced on  
friday night while the  
girl who stayed turned  
inner sanctum down low  
and my sister and i put  
a glass against the thin  
wall scared ourselves  
close to throwing up  
birch trees filling  
with blood bones of  
a murdered 6 yr old  
under the ferns near  
the water

#### FROM NOTES FOR THE BOOK

diseases worrying about germs  
(germans?) from being called  
a dirty my mother not using  
toilets because of her father  
not letting her go to eat at  
other people's houses carry  
ing toilet cover wrappers in  
the car and not eating cocks  
especially unskinned ones

#### HE LIKES OLD THINGS

quilts that fall  
apart where you  
touch glass boxes  
trunks years of  
fingers varnish  
the cover he sees  
the wood stripped  
to what it buys  
chests no one else  
would keep in the  
garage chairs way  
past rocking likes  
women who've been  
around and used,  
need restoring

leaving a family  
in the smoke the  
gas not crawling  
thru barbwire but  
taking the train  
her husband was  
older saw too  
much who knows  
why she picked  
middlebury did  
she live in a  
small town there  
years of silver  
buried at home it  
takes years for  
vermont to become  
her country her  
husband goes a  
little crazy dies  
in a state asylum  
all her friends  
have german accents  
she says they care  
more for the arts  
she picks students  
to live with her  
jews but artists  
philosophy majors  
first she tells  
them you know i  
was pretty loses  
her license 15  
times sits in on  
writing courses  
at bread loaf  
she remembers the  
boys her german  
accent gets stronger

#### THE WITH A ROOM OF HER OWN ALONE MADONNA

ink on the  
sheets in  
stead of  
pecker prints